3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

women helpers of his mother's age, one or two of whom had come with her at her marriage to attend her, and who themselves had married in her new village. Above them again were the older women helpers of his grandmother's generation, themselves grandmothers, whom he addressed as 'grandmother', as he did his own grandparents.

There were other sets of people whom the young child saw less often. When he visited his mother's relatives in her old home, he enjoyed all the allurement a child feels for living in a different place among people who want to gratify his every wish. Sometimes the maternal relatives visited the child's home, but then their relationship with him was on more formal terms. They did not dare for example to give him titbits in private, or to pet him, or even to correct him, lest his father's relatives might notice and remind them: 'This is *our* child.'

Other strangers came and went all the time, and the child learned to distinguish between the village inhabitants and those he, and others, designated as 'strangers'. He saw mostly the women who were entertained in the compound of his grandmother. He was sometimes taken by his mother when she went to greet strangers by the big house, and he learned early that he was not expected to make a noise or call attention to himself in the presence of these strangers.

In this women's world the higher age-group in each status group, that is of relatives and helpers, carried the chief authority, gave orders, and rebuked all below them for breaches of etiquette or failure to carry out commands. For the small child, the whole superstructure of authority in the women's world built round his daily life a sense of security, partly because it was so ordered and so little variable. When the Ngoni said, 'A child belongs to all the village. They can all cherish him and correct him,' they really meant this women's world, organized through the households and the families and the houses. The child's needs for food and sleep, washing and warmth, care when sick, were taken care of

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5

in the villages to-day, they do it by going over and over the events of those fateful years 1885–1898, from the first arrival of Weise up to the Ngoni war, in the vain hope of finding a satisfactory explanation of the connexion between Weise, the British South Africa Company, the North Charterland Company, and the British Crown. They give correct and precise details of the various Europeans who came to old Mpezeni's kraal seeking concessions, and finding the old chief adamant about signing away any concessions. 'Weise was his friend. Then came Weise's brother. He began to take money for our huts. Then Singu (Mpezeni's heir) became angry. Then they said, "We are Charterland" and Mpezeni refused: "I have given no promise to Charterland." Then came the *Azungu* war.'

I have given the foregoing events in detail because they are facts of history both to the Ngoni and the British, and necessary for understanding the present attitude of the Ngoni to white people. The Ngoni have given me their version again and again, always the same in substance, and always with the same emphasis, first on the refusal of Sir Harry Johnston and the British South Africa Company to recognize Mpezeni as the rightful chief in the land, and secondly on the treachery of Weise which delivered them into the hands of the North Charterland Company. Nor was the defeat in war their final humiliation. Singu, Mpezeni's heir, was taken and shot together with his wives; half the cattle of the Ngoni were taken as 'rightful loot'; and the North Charterland Company began assigning farms to Europeans in their tract. Six years later old Mpezeni died, leaving his grandson, a comparatively young boy, as his successor. On the old *indunas* and other sons of old Mpezeni fell the burden of guiding the young *inkosi* and carrying on the political and legal machinery subject to European administration.[1] At the same time fundamental economic changes were taking place. Settlers were arriving to acquire land and demand labour. The country was gradually parcelled out into European farms and native reserves, not without prolonged ill-feeling on both sides.[2] With the opportunity to work for wages came a demand for taxes to cover the costs of administration, and this demand in its turn made many men go out of the territory in search of better paid work in Southern Rhodesia and the Union.

[1] Under British South Africa Company till 1924.

[2] See North Charterland Inquiry.

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Ngoni prestige depended partly on the very effective justice meted out in the courts,[1] and also on the unquestioning allegiance of all subordinate authorities to the Paramount Chief. A Chewa Paramount Chief told me that he envied the power and prestige of the Ngoni Paramount, 'because all his chiefs obey him', and there is undoubtedly a widespread admiration among the less united local tribes for the centralized political organization of Ngoni, and the fact that they can hold a large area and many people together as an effective unit.

The Ngoni, therefore, in the course of the last thirty-five years have to a large extent made the adjustments necessary to their changed relations with the local peoples. They have accepted the new situation *de facto*, though they do not necessarily acquiesce in heart. They still think they are due a unique position among the tribes, and for this reason they dwell continually on the glories of *chamtendere*. Nor does the adoption of some measure of European ways reconcile them to a different attitude. Even educated Ngoni teachers and ministers have said to me with deep regret, 'We are ashamed because we are being ignored to-day by other tribes'.

Their attitude towards Europeans is also partly based on the European failure to accord them a unique position among the tribes, or at least to acknowledge their former unique position. This, to them, is a cause for feeling ashamed. They are ashamed too because the land, except in the Reserves, is no longer theirs, and they have to submit to taxation. 'To pay taxes, that is our war to-day', and something of the old martial spirit is evident in the young men who successfully evade the tax collectors, where the tax is collected directly by the Government, as in Mpezeni's country. In Gomani's country, on the other hand, where taxes are collected through the chiefs and headmen, though the men groan at having to find the money, they do not attempt to evade it, first because it would be useless, and secondly because they acknowledge the right of the chiefs to collect dues from them.

Any generalization about the Ngoni attitude to white people would be inaccurate without much detailed explanation, for which there is no space here. It is true though, I think, that at least in Mpezeni's country and possibly in the others, too, the Ngoni have not yet willingly made

[1] It is said that it is useless to bribe Ngoni chiefs and councillors.

the mental adjustments necessary to white contact. They still resent white intrusion and its results, economic, administrative, and missionary. At the same time many of them earnestly wish for a solution of the present tension, but towards such a solution there is no easy short cut.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS. Conclusions reached after the first period of field work are generally given with a certain reserve, especially in a complex field such as the Ngoni present. I think, however, that the conclusions in this paper can be stated with some certainty, and as dogmatic statements they form a basis for further field work. For they set the main problems for the detailed study of the Ngoni, and also of the Ngoni as a field for observing culture contact. In this article I hope that the three chief elements in the study have emerged, namely, the problem of Ngoni society as a cultural and political unit; the culture contact problems due to the contact, and part fusion, with local tribes; and the modern culture contact problems due to European penetration.

1. The Ngoni as a group must be regarded from two points of view: those who ethnically have a right to be called Ngoni, who are members of recognized Ngoni clans, with an acknowledged southern origin; and all those who live in the territory of the Ngoni Paramount Chief, and call themselves his people. These last were incorporated into the Ngoni state by the first group, who are still the ruling aristocracy, but the incorporated people now share in Ngoni 'national sentiment' and have made certain sociological changes in order to conform to Ngoni culture. It is their southern origin and their well remembered traditions of the past which confer distinctiveness on the true Ngoni, and on the state which they built. It is to their past they also turn for the charter for those institutions which are recognized as distinctively Ngoni, such as the Paramount Chieftainship, the hierarchy of rank, and patrilineal succession. Their historical origin and military achievements form also the charter for their former position as rulers of the country which they held before the advent of the Europeans.

2. The Europeans in two of the Ngoni areas destroyed the unique position of the Ngoni by defeating their armies. These armies had

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni
Yao FT7

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The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

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A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30*s.* to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

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The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

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Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes